



PreK-12 Research on Education Strategies to Advance Recovery and Turnaround (RESTART) Network

Task 2: Scan and Synthesis of Recovery Needs and Activities—Protocol

Elisabeth (Lyzz) Davis, Rebecca Steingut, Melissa Rodgers, Tia Clinton, and Kelisa Cain

Institute of Education Sciences (IES): Improving Pandemic Recovery Efforts in Education
Agencies (Grant R305X220009)

JULY 2025

RESTART 
Network

➤ Contents

➤ Purpose and Research Questions	1
Research Questions for Synthesis.....	1
Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria	1
Search Strategy	2
Data Extraction.....	5

► Exhibits

Exhibit 1. Priority Categories	5
--------------------------------------	---

► Purpose and Research Questions

This protocol describes how we will conduct the scans of pandemic recovery activities as well as the procedures to synthesize the research. Specifically, we specify how we will conduct a broad scan of information, including inclusion and exclusion criteria, search strategies and data extraction.

Research Questions for Synthesis

1. What activities were planned by state education agencies, local education agencies and/or schools to address COVID-related needs?
2. To what extent are the impacts of COVID-related activities being studied, evaluated or monitored?
3. For each question above, what is the variability by activity type and state?

Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria

To be included in our synthesis, reports must meet six criteria: setting, grade, timeframe, publication status, language, and country. Setting requires that studies describe activities targeting COVID-19 education recovery efforts. That is, the program, practice, product, or policy should have implications for early childhood, elementary, middle and high school students in the United States or for their educators. We include studies with pre-service educators including university students but exclude homeschool and private school settings. The setting is not limited to within the school system or physical setting and may include afterschool, summer programs, and cultural institutions (e.g., museums) as long as the school or district is involved. Grade refers to the requirement that the study focus on or include grades pre-K-12 during the first time point in the study. Studies that focus on post-secondary settings that do not limit to pre-service teachers or before pre-kindergarten will be excluded. Timeframe refers to the fact that reports must be published no earlier than March 2020. Publication Status criteria are not limiting but rather state that we include both published and unpublished reports. Language refers to the need for the report to be published in English. Country refers to the need for the report to be conducted in and focused on the United States education system.

Search Strategy

To identify reports addressing COVID-19 related educational recovery efforts, we use three complementary search strategies. First, we search EBSCO databases including Academic Search Premier, Education Source, Education Resources Information Center (ERIC), and APA PsycInfo. We used Boolean strings to limit to studies related to COVID-19, specifically:

(covid-19 OR covid OR “covid 19” OR pandemic OR coronavirus), to limit to education topics/student samples (e.g., child*¹ OR adolescent* pre-K OR pre-K12 OR elementary-aged OR “primary OR classroom”) and a string to search for education related outcomes (e.g., “Learning Gap” OR “Education Policy” OR (education AND recovery) OR (education AND Intervention) OR ESSER)). In our second search, we searched for topics related to educator pipeline and retention and used a search string targeting this topic (e.g., "teacher retention" OR "teacher pipeline*" OR "teacher attrition" "teacher recruit*" OR "teacher persistence" OR "teacher burnout" OR "grow your own").

Second, we reviewed the results of a related project’s search: the Covid and Educational Equity (CEE) project. This project relied on its own detailed search strategy.

Third and finally we conduct a nontraditional search of the following sources: [Council of Chief State School Officers \(CCSSO\)](#), [Council of the Great City Schools](#), [National Association of State Boards of Education](#), [Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning \(CASEL\)](#), [Center for Analysis of Longitudinal Data in Education Research \(CALDER\)](#). To conduct this search, we use a modified search strategy that included abstract screening process within the web-based search. Websites differ in their organization and search functionality. We often limit our search results to education-related products and then searched simply for strings associated with the pandemic. From there, we will read summaries of results and selected those that met our abstract screening criteria for import into our full text screening database.

¹ In these databases an asterisk is a truncation character. For example, “child*” will return all results for child or children.

Because our multiple search strategies may capture some of the same reports, we always de-duplicate results before proceeding with screening.

Screening

Screening will occur in two phases: 1) title and abstract screening and 2) full text screening. For title and abstract screening, we use abstrackr (<https://abstrackr.cebm.brown.edu/>) for the first round of screening and ASReview (van de Schoot et al., 2021) for the second round. For full text screening, we create a custom Airtable database and interfaces. Because not all information is available in the title and abstract, the following questions are used to determine eligibility for title and abstract screening. In cases with unclear answers the study is screened in on that criterion to enable determination at the full text stage.

1. Was the study conducted in the United States or its territories? *Yes or unsure for inclusion*
2. Did the study collect data on a PK-12 aged population (defined as ages 3-18 and/or enrolled in early childhood education programs, preschools, daycare centers, or private, public or charter schools) or educators (defined as individuals who work in a PK-12 educational setting and/or who work directly with PK-12 students in an educational capacity)? *Yes or unsure for inclusion*
3. Does the study include education or learning-related constructs (i.e., outcomes, practices, topics or content)? *Yes or unsure for inclusion*
4. Does the study focus on the COVID-19's effects or strategies to address its impact on educational outcomes? Specifically, responses and adaptations of schools to the pandemic (e.g., changes in educational policies, mental health, educational equity, hybrid or remote learning) or efforts schools are making toward educational recovery as a result of COVID-19 (e.g., addressing learning loss or achievement gaps, mental health programming, learning loss recovery programs)? *Yes or unsure for inclusion*
5. Is this a literature scan, systematic review, research synthesis, or meta-analysis? *No or unsure for inclusion*

The following screening questions are used to further assess eligibility when screening the full-text:

1. Was the study conducted in the United States or its territories? *Yes or unsure for inclusion*
2. Is this a literature scan, systematic review, research synthesis, meta-analysis, auto-ethnography, essay, media report, opinion editorial (op-ed), or memo? *No or unsure for inclusion*
3. Did the study collect data on a PK-12 aged population (defined as ages 3-18 and/or enrolled in early childhood education programs, preschools, daycare centers, or private, public or charter schools) or educators (defined as individuals who work in a PK-12 educational setting and/or who work directly with PK-12 students in an educational capacity)? *Yes or unsure for inclusion*
4. Does the study focus on COVID-19 educational recovery (i.e., addressing learning loss or achievement gaps, mental health programming, extended learning opportunities)? *Yes or unsure for inclusion*
5. Is the SEA, LEA, state or school district involved in the development, implementation or evaluation of a strategy, activity or intervention? *Yes or unsure for inclusion*
6. Does the study relate to or involve any educational activities, interventions, programs or strategies? *Yes or unsure for inclusion*
7. Does at least one study intervention activity fall into one of these broad priority categories? *Yes or unsure for inclusion*
 - a. Literacy
 - b. Math
 - c. Student Wellbeing
 - d. Accelerated Learning
 - e. Tutoring
 - f. Expanded Learning Opportunities
 - g. Educator Pipeline & Retention

Exhibit 1. Priority Categories

Term	Definition	Synonyms/ Examples
Literacy Curriculum	Implements an activity targeting literacy outcomes	Reading, English, ELA, Language Arts
Math Curriculum	Implements an activity targeting math outcomes	Numeracy, Mathematics, Addition, Geometry
Student Wellbeing	Implements an activity related to social or emotional learning, student motivation, engagement, belonging and school climate	Mental Health, Mental Wellness, Relationships, Anxiety/Depression, Motivation, Emotions, Belongingness, School Climate, Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)
Accelerated Learning Program	Implements an activity that enables students to progress through school at a faster rate	
Tutoring Program	Implements an activity to provide any type of tutoring or one on one instruction	Peer tutoring, one on one instruction, high dosage tutoring
Expanded Learning Opportunities		Out of School Time (OST), extended school year, after school
Educator Pipeline & Retention	Teacher pipeline (Pre-service and in-service training or professional development) or addressing teacher shortages or making sure they have the resources they need. Includes substitute teachers	Hiring is an eligible activity, teacher motivation and teacher self-efficacy are eligible outcomes, Plan, Do, Study, Act training model

Data Extraction

Eligible studies are coded such that each strategy or intervention was recorded and the following questions were answered for each strategy.

1. Which topic does the activity relate to?
 - a. Literacy Curriculum
 - b. Math Curriculum
 - c. Student Wellbeing
 - d. Accelerated Learning

- e. Tutoring Program
 - f. Extended Learning Opportunities
 - g. Educator Pipeline & Retention
2. What State/States are associated? [Select all that apply from list of states/territories]
3. What grade level is the sample for this activity (Check all that apply)
- a. PreK/Childcare
 - b. Elementary: Kindergarten-Grade 5
 - c. Middle: Grade 6-8
 - d. High: Grade 9-12
4. What is the target population? (Check all that apply)
- a. Unhoused/Homeless
 - b. Emerging Bilingual (ELL)
 - c. Black/African American students
 - d. Asian American/ Pacific Island students (AAPI)
 - e. Latinx/Hispanic students
 - f. Native American / Alaskan native students
 - g. LGBTQ Students
 - h. Students with Disabilities and/or Students receiving special education services (504 or IEPs)
 - i. Refugee students
 - j. Students in foster care
 - k. Students with FRPL/Low Socio-economic status
 - l. Students performing below grade level (in any subject))
 - m. General Education
 - n. Other (Please Specify)

5. What is the timeframe of the identified need or activity? (Check all that apply)
- a. Spring 2020
 - b. Summer 2020
 - c. Fall 2020
 - d. Winter 2021
 - e. Spring 2021
 - f. Summer 2021
 - g. Fall 2021
 - h. Winter 2022
 - i. Spring 2022
 - j. Summer 2022
 - k. Fall 2022
 - l. Winter 2023
 - m. Spring 2023
6. Specific Educator Activity/Outcome²
- a. Wellbeing: SEL teacher intervention, measures of teacher burnout
 - b. Pipeline: grow your own, pre-service training, undergrad programs, relating to before they are hired as a full-time educator
 - c. Retention: compensation, promotion, feeling supported by the district
 - d. Professional Development: In-service only (meaning once they're already hired by a school/district)
 - e. Staffing Model: creative uses of teacher workforce outside of one teacher per classroom.
 - f. Other
-

² This coding question was added during the second search in December 2023 when we searched for terms specifically related to educator pipeline and retention.



1400 Crystal Drive, 10th Floor | Arlington, VA 22202-3289
+1.202 403-5000 | <https://www.air.org/>

Copyright © 2025

28586_08/25